



I

P

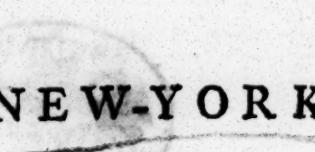
A

LETTER

K

FROM AN

OFFICER at NEW-YORK



K

TO A

FRIEND in LONDON.

LONDON,

Printed for W. NICOLL, at No. 51, in St. PAUL's
CHURCH-YARD.

M.DCC.LXXVII.

ESTATE

1840



Lee, to avoid either killing or wounding him, that a native of Britain, who, from disappointed ambition, has planted the point against the power that first put a sword into his hand, and paid for his military education, may be prepared for his grave without the least impression of any martial instrument.

We begin now severely to want that part of the city which those unhappy destroyers of their country have consumed; as several good families, whom their army have ruined, come daily shivering in for our protection, and meet with such a reception, according to their stations, as can only be obtained from clemency, guided by order and œconomy. Many of the poor ladies have scarce a petticoat to cover them, being stripped of furniture, apparel, and every thing that could make a Yankee soldier either a shirt or a pair of breeches. Indeed, the poor fellows are in such a deplorable state, that a good-natured lady, who has two petticoats, would rather give one for a covering, than look at a fellow-creature in such a naked condition.

Your worthy friend, the Rev. Mr. ****, our Chaplain, frequently expatiates on the happy state that this country so lately enjoyed, and the present scenes of misery to which these people have been

been urged to bring so immediately on themselves and families. He gives us several instances from history of the dreadful examples that deluded nations have made of such patriots as Gen. Lee, and points out the present state of their own Clergy, who before were almost implicitly obeyed ; but, after breathing the spirit of rebellion on the people, attending their camps to keep alive the flame which they kindled, and spending their lungs and their fortunes to support the spirit of their cause, they now find the sad effects of instructing the people to be disobedient, and want the power they opposed to protect them ; for, in such scenes of disorder and rapine, but little regard is paid to either morality or religion ; and now, except they can plunder their share, swig rum, and bear a firelock, they are deemed a useless order amongst them. I assure you our friend George is most vigilant in his function, and from well-supported texts, with his graceful person and thundering voice, he so animates our soldiers, that, were he in regiments, you would sometimes take him for a General haranguing his army on the approach of a battle ; and revives what I have read of the great and reverend Walker, who defended Londonderry ; for so high is his military spirit, that it is impossible for us to prevent his appearing in danger, from a principle, that every young fellow, who is enlisted in the service of his country, should employ all his

power and talents on every laudable and useful occasion, in the service of it. He plumes himself much in having a share in our victories, and insists upon it, that the gown and the sword, when made of good stuff, are two of the best links in the chain of government ; and sometimes wishes they would so far consider it, as to make some addition to a Chaplain's pay ; for honest George, from his benevolent disposition amongst such a number of objects, can scarce keep a crown in his pocket.

The great advantage a regiment derives from a good and active Chaplain, at such a time as this, is very conspicuous in our rev. friend. Allowing for his good constitution, natural vivacity, and the share which in some measure he is obliged to partake in our entertainments, no man of his years can behave with more becoming decency ; the soldiers he pleasantly calls his parishioners, and not being obliged to that reserve which is prudent in officers to bear, from the affection he has for them, and his natural affability, we seldom see him without several about him ; and I really believe, that his presence, in any scene of irregularity, would be a greater check to them than the dread of the halbert. He endeavours to make them sensible, that true liberty can only be maintained by a due obedience to well-founded laws which we have submitted

submitted to be governed by, and that a soldier, who discharges his duty, shares equal honour with his commander : he tells them, it was the noble spirit of obedience to discipline which so firmly united the Roman legions, that they marched and retreated as one man, made them impenetrable, and gave them power to force down all that opposed them, which raised the honour of every Roman soldier beyond their dependent princes ; and to charge a veteran with neglect of duty at the head of his cohort was a mortification that few survived.

We were yesterday highly entertained from a window in a room where we dined. Just as George came to the door he fell in chat with some of our soldiers, who were talking of one of the men who was wounded in taking a rebel officer prisoner, after killing three Yankees who defended him ; and from some introductory chat, whilst they all stood open mouthed to hear him, he told them a story from some history, of some great Emperor who invaded another great Emperor's dominions, and was driving all pell-mell before him, till a common soldier, on seeing his Emperor on the point of being taken prisoner, boldly advanced, cut his way through twelve men, and stabbed the invader to the heart ; which gallant action so depressed the enemy, and inspired his fellow soldiers, that they pressed

pressed on and gained ground directly. But, just here we were told that dinner was on table ; and as he and his company seemed to be better entertained, we left him to compleat the victory ; and when the heat of battle was over, he came up and sat contentedly down to a cold dinner. Such familiarity, properly supported, gives him such an opportunity of seeing the temper and dispositions of the men, that he is the best index we can refer to. The soldiers, he tells us, calls the Americans worse than deserters ; for they have not only revolted, but turned our own arms against us ; and such zeal and spirit runs through the whole regiment, that, in his opinion, the best plantation on the continent could not tempt a man to desert. Just after dinner we had three Yankee deserters brought to us ; and, lucky for the poor fellows, we had fragments left sufficient to fill their hungry bellies ; and, being almost naked, we bought cloaths for them of some old women, who make a trade of stripping the dead soldiers.— They confirmed the accounts we frequently receive of the distress of the rebel army, and that several of their regiments have petitioned the Honourable Congress for a quantity of tar and feathers sufficient to cloath them ; the poor men beg only for stuff, being well skilled themselves at putting the materials together, and have at present amongst them several of the artificers

who

who made the first pattern of this new-fashioned garment, which was undoubtedly designed by the High and Mighty Congress as a robe for instituting a new American Order of Knighthood ; and, to shew their regard to their Mother Country, conferred the first honour on his — by proxy, in tarring and pluming his officer at Boston ; and, to dignify the installation, bound the substituted Knight on horseback, with his face to the tail, dragging him through multitudes of applauding spectators, whilst, at intervals, Imperial Tea was copiously poured down his throat, to the health of the King and the Family Royal.

I know not, Sir, how you citizens relish such honour ; but can assure you, that the army and navy in general are so fired with resentment at the many indignities that this ungrateful people have cast on Royal Authority, and our fellow-subjects, that nothing but a humane reflection on the miserable state to which we have reduced them, could have restrained our hands from a more severe chastisement ; a people who, when they first quitted our land, carried with them the seeds of opposition to our government, laws, and religion, and have ever been as assiduous in sowing them in the hearts of their children, as they have been in cultivating their lands ; who, in the lowest state of indigence, were planted here by the hand of

Britain,

Britain, cherished in their infancy, promoted and protected in their commerce, 'till oppulence and pride swelled their hearts to rebellion, and they forgot their Patrons ; who, under the guileful appearance of liberty, deluded so many unguarded men to their machinations, as rendered them not only able to plunder private property, but wantonly disposed of the lands and lives of those who would not join and become subject to their tyranny, and whilst they made poverty a plea for their murmurs, were shaping out to themselves a great and independent empire, dividing it into principalities, conferring power and titles, raising mighty armies, building fleets, forts, and castles, and, oh ! shocking to nature ! aiming at cementing alliances with the most powerful and established enemies of the country from whence they sprang, had their protection, and are, by establishment, ranked as natural born subjects ; yet these mean mortals, who by thousands surrounded and abused a single British subject on the first appearance of the rod of correction, fled by thousands from ditches to hedges, from hedges to stone walls, and from thence to woods and mountains, many of them having scarce a rag or a feather to cover them. Sure none but such wise politicians as the members of this Mighty Congress, would have risqued such a certain state of happiness to themselves and their country against

the

the power of Great-Britain, with such soldiers, such officers, and such generals, who have now left them in the state of the poor giddy wench, who, from her stock of unhatched eggs, multiplied chicken to such a degree, that in imagination she became possessed of fortune, title, and splendor, but, regardless of the main chance, and tottering with pride, slap-dash went all the eggs, and being startled from her golden dream, had the present American mortification of seeing the stock, on which her present existence depended, and on which she founded her future grandeur, lay blended in ruin together.

In the news-papers which are transmitted to us, we frequently read of the distressed state to which we have reduced the men; but no more mention is made of the women and children, than if they were insensible of misery, and no part of the human species, who, in this case, are the only real objects of compassion, being reduced to a wretched state by the imprudence of their husbands, who are bound by the laws of God and Nature to protect them. The country round being now gleaned, such swarms of distressed women and children flock to their camp as are shocking to behold; and wherever we see a soldier's wife with two or three children, we are sure to behold one half naked skeleton; for from that maternal tenderness which

is natural to the sex, what nutriment and rags they can collect must go to preserve their infants, whilst these patriotic heroes, who are fighting for posterity, (being now pinched themselves) appear to have as much regard to the future existence of their children, as they had the moment they begot them; and the same tenderness for their wives as the fellow had who always declared he loved her better than himself, till a strong appetite convinced her to the contrary, by his eating up all the morsel she had provided for their dinner.

As your city abounds with such a number of American patriots, I wish you would prevail on them to send these poor women and children over a few cargoes of old cloaths from Rag-fair. I assure you, they are so commiserated here, that I believe there is not a commander in our army but what would condescend to send them with a trumpet, and request to have them divided amongst the poor creatures; but, I imagine, your patriots would much rather talk of spending life and fortune, than give any of these distressed creatures a gown or petticoat: but if peace should be restored, no doubt but the merchants, who have been their advocates, and who formerly so largely profited by their trade, will take compassion and receive their paper currency for as much stuff as will new cloath the whole continent.

We imagine that nothing now keeps their army together, but the dread that the Congress entertains of their being dispersed before they can secure themselves; for as few of the poor fellows, if they return to their habitations, have either a cow, a sow, a pig, or a hen left, and, from a notion of our making reprisals on land, for their depredations at sea, the spirit of agriculture is so depressed amongst the farmers, that their soldiers, when disbanded, will certainly scour the continent in banditties till we can suppress them; though they cannot use their firelocks like soldiers, they will serve to plunder; and, I fancy their honours, who have brought them to it, will receive the first compliment, and when they are reduced to the lowest ebb, no doubt but your patriots will cry, “to what a miserable state have these poor innocent people been reduced by a cruel and vindictive ministry!” like the old tale of the lady, who, being positively charged by her husband not to ride on the mastiff dog, was determined, in opposition to his command, to have one gallop on Towser; but after being cast from his back, and violently maimed and bruised, she charged him with what was absolutely the consequence of her own disobedience. But any one, who sees the extasy which appears in the countenances of those who come within the verge of our protection, and hears the history of their sufferings, must be as

sensible as they, that Providence sent us here to save them from a set of the most absolute tyrants that ever debased the name of Liberty ; for no sooner had the patriots of Boston (the fountain of rebellion) packed such a Congress together as would answer their purpose, and deluded the people to raise an army, but the adage was verified, "*Raise an army, and an army will support itself;*" for directly this dreadful sentence was pronounced, *They that are not for us are against us*, and the point of the sword held to every breast that was luke-warm in their cause, threatening to make life and land the forfeiture of disobedience, every man's circumstance was directly explored, and the whole land ransacked for every mercantile commodity that could be exported, to exchange for military stores and the subsistence of the army ; and the paper credit of the Honourable Congress must be taken for all. It was in vain for any farmer to complain that he wanted his servants and horses to till the land, every thing must be sacrificed to the cause of liberty, 'till, such arbitrary proceedings convinced them of their error, and such a dejection spread through the land, that, except in the sea ports, and amongst those who shared the rum which they plundered, there is not the least appearance of *spirit* amongst them. What else but a general dislike could cause such an army to fly before us ? If we examine the globe,

globe, we find but little difference in the natural strength and courage of mankind ; and, no doubt but these people have their share. Their advocates say, they were not disciplined ; but that I deny ; for they have many experienced engineers and veteran officers amongst them ; nor could any men be more rigourously exercised and piously preached to. We may read of many armies, who have been undisciplined and rudely led on, that have stood till they have been cut to pieces, when they have liked their cause and their commanders. At that unparelleled attack at Bunker's-hill (which honour I had no share in) there was not one of our soldiers in twenty that ever faced an enemy before ; yet, notwithstanding the enemy were so deeply intrenched, that the instruments of death could scarce be seen, notwithstanding the dreadful havock that was made amongst them, nothing was thought on but conquest ; and on the remnant pressed to the muzzles of their rifle barrels, drove treble their number from intrenchments, and gave them such a sample of Old English fighting, that, except under cover of hedges and stone walls, I believe they never more will care to come within the reach of our muskets. Such an action, and the conduct and bravery of our army in general, was far distant from the aspersions which some of our countrymen cast, and the hopes which they entertained of our deserting to the enemy.—

Remorse

Remorse must deeply strike such men, if they will reflect on the miseries to which their delusions have reduced these people, who are now, too late, become sensible that they have been made the unhappy dupes of avarice and ambition at home, and wanton faction abroad; and they who had fortunes, and suffered themselves to be deluded, now reflect on their folly, like men who, for the sake of fashion or company, ruin both fortune and constitution, by joining in debauches for which nature had given them neither inclination nor constitution. And as to the Quakers of Philadelphia; as the patriots of Boston formerly hanged several of them for preaching, because they would have neither government nor religion but of their own framing, the Quakers, on this occasion, have prudently kept their necks out of the Boston collar, 'till they saw how things went; but now the scene is changed; they appear as if they would be well pleased to see some of their old friends hanged for preaching so violently against their friend George.

The people in general now discover the drift, and are sensible of the principles and characters of their honourable Masters; for, as few men of fortune and understanding would fill such a desperate station, some of the most worthless were chosen, or pressed themselves into the office, and,

as

as is frequently in the Corporations in England, the people found, too late, that they became governed by a set of men they despised. We have obtained several fragments of the code of laws, under which these potentates intended to govern their subjects, which may convince any sensible man who reads them, that such a set of legislators were never assembled since their predecessor Oliver Cromwell packed a like parliament that he knew would confound both law and government, to give a fair pretext for the taking the reins into his own hand ; and the people now begin to fix their eyes on a similar man in the Congress, who they surmise has been the chief instrument of the whole. Many have been the instances of one man as effectually poisoning a Kingdom, a Council, a Corporation, a Jury, or a Vestry, as one drop of poison corrupting the whole mass of blood ; an instance of which you had lately in England ; but I believe if these people had their friend Forty-five amongst them at this time, they would much sooner tar and feather him, than give him 45 hogsheads of tobacco.

I have frequently conversed with several merchants here, who inclining to government as much as the temper of such turbulent times would admit of, now reflect on the change, freely acknowledging the happy state they were in

in, and the wealth that flowed on them from the commerce and protection of Great-Britain ; they are sensible of the heavy burden of taxes with which the subjects of England are loaded, in support of a fleet and army to maintain and defend such extensive dominions, and as they have shared that protection, they freely own, after such long indulgence, that they ought to contribute their share, and confess the demand was so moderate, that nothing but the spirit of rebellion could have opposed it ; and some own, that though the tax was murmured at, it was the appendage that materially struck them, having entered into several lucrative branches of trade, as ought not in prudence to be exposed to Custom-house or revenue officers, stationed here by Government. These men now coolly reflect on the danger they have escaped, if forgiveness can be obtained from their Mother, for the fleets, the armies, the docks, the foundries, the store-houses, the arsenals, the magazines, and the Lord knows what, that their hair-brained politicians had planned to defend such an extensive country, would have swallowed up the revenues of a wealthy empire, and must have brought on beggary and tarring and feathering the collectors all over the continent ; for if such a moderate tax so roused these Sons of Freedom, it would have caused such inflammations and divisions in all the provinces for independence and supremacy, that, like the African Princes, the

false

sale of their subjects might become their only revenue, except what they could pick up by their present practice of pirating, whilst their frugal Mother, by prudent steps, gradually encreased her fleet with her dominions, under whose protection they might have traversed the watery globe, and claimed an honourable share in that flag to which all nations bend.

Thus far, my good Friend, in compliance to the earnest request you made in your last letter, I have given my sentiments on the present state of these deluded people; but as you have ever been a strong advocate for them, I imagine a more favourable representation would be more agreeable to you, and gain more credit, as being more consistent to your sentiments; but as I have ever been an advocate for Liberty, and know that every thing which comes from you flows from an honest, uninfluenced heart, your different sentiments in politics shall never invade the high esteem in which I have ever held you; yet must take the liberty to tell you, that the dreadful apprehensions which you have expressed of the impending ruin of Old England, the danger the national stock is in, the wickedness of a corrupt ministry, their remissness in necessary protection, and the danger you are in of being invaded by the French and Spaniards, and all destroyed by fire and sword,

if we do not make peace with the Americans and come directly to your protection, has something so romantic in it, that I am at a loss to account how you, who never feared any thing, should dread the only two things an Englishman ought not to fear, the French and Spaniards. Upon my word, friend Edward, if I was near you, I would soon rattle away such visionary notions, and whisk such humming patriots from your ears. As you promised, at my departure, to visit my little family, I hope you have not terrified my wife and daughter with such dreadful apprehensions.

I am confident, there are but few men whose general knowledge extends so far as yours, and is better acquainted with the history of England. Pray, Sir, reflect on the only attempt of any consequence which has been made on this island within seven hundred years, and that by the Spaniards, who came when they were in their meridian of wealth and power, with a fleet of a hundred and fifty sail of thundering men of war, appointed with every thing that the wealth of India could procure, and attended with the prayers and blessings of the Pope, besides a whole cargo of religious gear, to scatter amongst such good Catholics as would risk both soul and body in the cause, and most dreadful anathemas pronounced against all who resisted such a blessed undertaking,

which

which alone was sufficient at that time to shake the thrones of half the princes in Europe, when England, I suppose, was not then possessed with two ships of a thousand ton burthen, and at a time when the Protestants were no more than sufficient to defend themselves against the Papists ; yet, on the apprehensions of the Spaniards setting foot on English ground, such a spirit was diffused through the whole nation, that every old woman kept exercising her three legged stool, in hopes of having the honour of cracking the skull of a Spanish Don ; the city of London, in the low state it was then in, sent out ten thousand men, and thirty ships ; and every part of the coast, where it was practicable for them to land, swarmed with soldiers and voluntiers, to prepare them for the bliss which the Pope had promised to all who died in the cause ; but Heaven and our invincible sailors made such dreadful havock of them, in sight of the land they looked on as their own, that the scattered remnant, which returned by degrees, went with the doleful tidings to their monarch, saying, like the servants of Job, “ we alone have escaped to tell you.” Thus was England defended two hundred years since, when governed by a Virgin Queen, who being exasperated at his Spanish Majesty’s insolence, and knowing his presumption proceeded from his great abundance of gold and silver, of which we then had but little,

gave her loving subjects free leave to humble his pride ; for which purpose she sent out the gallant Essex, whom she *knew* to be a *good man*, Howard, Raleigh, Drake, Norris, and a few such, who stripped, plundered, sunk, burnt, and destroyed numerous fleets, cities, towns and villages, and brought home such loads of those tempting metals, that our fingers have ever since itched to be at them, and his Spanish Majesty, on finding the prayers of the Pope took quite a different effect, sent an express to his Holiness, begging of him, for God's sake, to leave off cursing the English : so, as they invited us to it, by giving the first blow, I believe they will hardly tempt us in the same manner to such another job ; for as they can get no great matter from us that they want, they have ever been as cautious of engaging with us, as a rich merchantman would to engage a privateer ; and, indeed, I believe they are a peaceable sort of people, with whom we might live on good neighbourly terms, if it consisted with our interest ; but some of our honest traders frequently tread on their heels to provoke them to challenge us, in hopes of reviving the golden days of good queen Bess. As to our old friends, the French, we have so often mauled them in the prime of their days, that, I believe, they have no more stomach for a game of war with us than the Spaniards ; and as they are now surrounded by many able gamesters, they must be cautious how they move their

seldom desert their leaders ; and, as ours have dealt so freely here with what you call our own flesh and blood, I dare say, if an enemy lands amongst you, they will not find a more tender reception ; but, besides these, you may add many thousands who can level a firelock ; and the great decrease of partridges and woodcocks evinces the great number of flying marksmen, who would far out do the American riflemen ; and all the jolly fox-hunters would form themselves into companies of light horse ; and as they can likewise shoot flying, I will warrant, if such birds of passage should land amongst you, you will soon have occasion to find them either graves or good English beef.—The train-bands of London I have not before mentioned, as they, I suppose, will be reserved to defend the metropolis.

But suppose these wicked French and Spaniards should come, and swallow up our ready cash, bank, bank notes, and public security, by levelling us with fire and sword ; why then, my good friend, I would advise you all to follow the example of the Antient Britons, when the Romans invaded them, and, instead of Wales, go to Scotland, where I promise that neither French or Spaniards will ever follow you ; then you may think yourselves happy that we staid here, for we can send our transports and a fleet to protect you ; and

and when by degrees we have brought you all over, if you can bring our favourite family with you, of whom you seem so careful, when we are all got together we will sing, *O be joyful.* I promise, when we have finished our job, that we shall have land enough to set you all up, and with our fleet and army bid defiance to all the Yankees, and begin a new world of our own. Now, I know, Sir, on reading this, notwithstanding my care in planning so good a retreat for you, that you will say, I am got into one of my old rattling humours: but, faith, my good friend, you deserve it; for can you, and your humming patriots, think to persuade us to leave such a job unfinished, and come home on such a fool's errand as to save Old England from the French and Spaniards; no, my good friend, as one of your great patriots said in a great house, that we knew not how to make either peace or war, we are determined to convince you, that we know how to make war; after which, I hope you will indulge us with the privilege of making such a peace as we think proper, and most agreeable to the *constitution* of our *patients*.

You look, Sir, on the national debt as a national evil, and wish such a scheme had never been planned; certainly, none but the poor have a right to object to it, as the rich are continually crowding their fortunes there, though they are always grumbling at the security. As few know the

the rise and progress of this kingdom better than you, pray consider the profusion of wealth that has been spread all over the land in cultivation, and buildings, since the commencement of this debt ; the vast improvements that have been made in all the public roads, whereon, besides the increase of mercantile traffick, there are thrice the number of carriages and splendid equipages ; survey the immense increase of buildings in the great metropolis, and all our manufacturing cities and towns ; even Ireland, Scotland, both our Indies, and all our dependent places have felt it ; and so great has been the increase of ready specie, as if Jupiter, at the establishing of this fund, had fell in love with Britannia, and continually kept showering down gold into her lap. What has all this proceeded from ? certainly from this grand magazine of credit, which, like so much ready money in purse, stimulates our merchants to find out new resources of trade, and, on every prospect of gain, infuse a spirit of industry into our manufacturers ; it is this which enables them to import not only the necessaries, but all the valuable and tempting materials in the universe, which, by going through the hands of our industrious manufacturers and traders, provoke the wealthy to scatter their fortunes amongst the publick, from whence it frequently returns to the stock that produced it, for the emolument of the owner ; like rich manure, which

which maintains both the husbandman and the soil that produced it. Such an Hesperian tree requires a watchful dragon to guard it ; and he who lends a hand in pruning its branches must be a friend to his country ; but it must be dangerous to strike at the root, for the credit of a whole nation may be blasted, by the means that have ruined many an individual.

The low esteem in which you hold Prime Ministers would bear great weight with me, from a man of your known generosity and benevolence, if I was not certified, from experience, that such sentiments are inseparable from the stile of a patriot ; though I always inclined to the patriots, till such a number of them patronized No. 45, and the American rebellion ; yet no man ever heard me condemn Prime Ministers, or the measures of government ; I knew they were moved by springs that I could neither see nor judge of, and have ever been determined to act consistent with the principles of our constitution, in condemning no man without sound proof and fair trial. Indeed, Prime Ministers seem to be a set of people, all over the world, as if singled out by princes to shield them from the envenomed shafts of their subjects.

I remember, when I was a boy, that it made a strange impression on me, when frequently hearing the people speak of rapacious Ministers, and that the whole country would soon be ruined by them ; from whence I concluded, that they were some kind of devouring animals, and wondered that the Church-wardens did not encourage the destroying of them, by giving so much per head, as they did for foxes, pole-cats, and other such vermin.

You know no man is more free from any motive of partiality to government than I am ; and, as I paid for my commission, I promise, that if fortune and my sword does not give me a fair title to preferment, that I will never beg for it ; yet, will not suffer faction to prejudice me against the power I serve, or blunt the edge of my sword when commanded by them to draw it. If Mammon be the deity that the English adore, I think they ought to pay some reverence to his high-priest ; for all the wealth that this kingdom is possessed of, has been acquired under such as have been called rapacious and wicked ministers ; nor can I recollect above one, in the space of two hundred years, that was deemed honest, and he, poor gentleman, like many other honest men, could not find out the art either of enriching himself or his country ; nor, indeed, have I ever heard of any of these

these wicked ones that have done much for themselves in that station ; whilst some of our adventurers abroad, and honest jobbers at home, have acquired more in one day, than many of the others have done in the whole course of their ministry ; and such men, after thus accumulating, have frequently, to save their bacon, directly housed themselves amongst the patriots, and joined them in railing against a corrupt ministry : therefore, as these men can get but little more than the curses of the public, with which they have always been most bountifully rewarded, if they are content with such poor wages, and we can get rich under them, I cannot see any occasion either to change the breed or cross the line ; so they shall have my free consent to keep on in the old way ; but then, I know your gravity and precaution will say, what will become of posterity ? why, that was the very thing that the good old folks used to say some hundred years ago ; but, thanks to Providence, their posterity have done pretty well ; and as to our national debt, we cannot expect a security for it from above ; nor can I see any great danger it is in if we are unanimous and industrious ; but if it should fall off by degrees, and die of a gradual consumption, 140 millions is a good round sum ; and we may comfort ourselves as a poor fellow did that had an enormously fat wife he was very fond of, who thanked God, that

if things did go bad, his dear love would be a good while starving. So, my good friend, I would advise you to resign such anxious cares about posterity, and all such things as are only in the hand of Providence, and beyond our power to prevent ; for my part, I shall ever, besides enjoying myself in a state adequate to my fortune, do every thing in my power for my family whilst I am with them, but shall never abridge myself of a bottle of wine, for fear some of my posterity may be reduced to drink water. And as to your friends, the Americans, (whom you are so tender of) I assure you, I had rather run the hazard of my life in bringing them to a just sense of their own happiness, than colour the point of my sword with a drop of their blood. I look, Sir, on the conduct of these people, and the measures which our guardians have pursued to bring them to obedience, a matter which essentially concerns every Briton ; and as you have so freely and warmly defended their measures, and stated dangers that may accrue from pursuing our conquest, I have endeavoured to dispel such gloomy apprehensions as, I fear, have been established by party prejudice, which I know from experience is not easily eradicated. The tranquility I now enjoy, in regard to politics, chiefly derived from the last visit I made my uncle, who, you know, is one of the happiest country gentlemen in the kingdom, where, being for some time retired

from

from the violence of party, the observations I made on some scenes which he introduced me to, and his sentiments on several occasions, furnished me with cool reflections on the principles which formed such a state of happiness in him.—I went down about the beginning of September, and, after spending a few days in sprinkling some shot amongst his partridges, he invited several of the neighbouring gentlemen to dine with him ; and as the Great Patriot was then in bloom, being full fraught with every coffee-house argument in support of the hero, I thought to have made a shining figure amongst them, and, soon after dinner, being impatient for the subject, began with, “ Pray, gentlemen, have any of you heard how W—s has —” Here, my uncle darted a look which struck me silent, and different topics engaged the afternoon’s conversation, in which I had but little share, being cast from my darling subject. The next morning, at breakfast, I asked my uncle, why he interrupted me ? and, after some pause, he began : “ *Will*, (said he) you were going to revive an unhappy subject, which, for some time, had intirely destroyed the tranquility of our neighbourhood, and has been but lately restored : we used to live very happily, and in rotation dine with each other, till that great patriot appeared on the stage, when some of our neighbours, who are naturally pretty sanguine, collected from news-papers and

and pamphlets such a passion for him and his principles, that they would allow no man to have common sense, or common honesty, that would not die for Wilkes and Liberty. I have had four or five of them in a morning come galloping to my house with different news-papers, holding up paragraphs to me, with, ' Ah, there Sir, will you be convinced now ? do not you see plainly, Sir, that we might as easily have taken Peru and Mexico from the Spaniards as we took Bellisle from the French, and have got as much money in one year as would have paid off our national debt ? The French and Spaniards knew it, Sir, or they would not have given that Scotch rogue and his two accomplices a million of money, for making such a scandalous peace. Can you, Sir, or any man who has a regard for Old England, stand coolly by, after all the blood and treasure we have spent, and see his country bought and sold, and tore to pieces, by such a set of villains ; and must we see the honest man who discovered their roguery fall a victim to their revenge, and rot in a gaol, for no other crime on earth, but standing forth as a true Briton, and ready to die for his country ?' Thus they went on ; and as most men are fond of propagating their party principle, such a spirit was diffused amongst their credulous neighbours, servants, and tenants, (many of whom knew not whether Wilkes was man or beast, or could distinguish

stingish between liberty, a puppet-shew, or a plumb-pudding) that they were all ready to die for Wilkes and Liberty ; and that the people might not be ruined with their eyes shut, a subscription was raised to furnish the alehouses with all the proper news-papers. The Beckford's Head, in our village, used to be crowded about the time that the papers come in ; but as they were all of the same side, they used to go off, after swallowing the news, their pint of beer, and cursing all the rogues of state, which the landlord observing, he artfully procured a journeyman taylor, who had an everlasting clack, to argue in favour of the ministry : this so far took effect, that the poor fellows were not only deluded to spend most of their time there, but continually brought in fresh forces to confute him ; but he having an invincible tongue, and suspecting him to be a Scotchman, they were were at last so exasperated that they fell upon the poor fellow and half killed him, for the good of their country ; and though one of his arms was rendered useless for above half a year, there was not a Justice of Peace in the county that would hear him ; for they were all of the same side, except one, and he did not think it worth while to displease his neighbours by doing justice to a poor taylor. So, between the patriots and such a set of magistrates, the poor fellow had a fine sample of English liberty. A poor cobler in our village likewise fell a martyr to them ; for their being but two,

one of them had a Last painted blue, and set in his window ; and the other, on saying he knew nothing about Wilkes and Liberty, and would not alter the colour of his Last without knowing some reason for it, they deemed him directly one of the bad sort, set up another cobler against him, and the poor man was soon kept by the parish. The flame spread as violently amongst the fair sex, who, understanding that Wilkes had wrote a fine Essay on the Ladies, and seeing him so highly in favour with the men, would not venture to appear without a blue ribband, or something to distinguish them of the right sort, lest they should be deemed improper subjects to propagate a race that would die for Wilkes and Liberty. Whilst we were in this state, as our Vicar is much respected by us all, I requested that he on this occasion would exert himself ; but he prudently declined it, saying, he would not risque the opinion he had established, by opposing it against such a violent tempest ; ' I look on it (says he) as a raging fever that will have its course, and soon either destroy the body that produced it, or leave it in a languid state'. I soon found the doctor's remark, just ; but I really believe, when this fever was at the height, that if any desperate fellow had appeared and encouraged an insurrection, that they might soon have brought it to as high a pitch as the rebellion of Tyler and Cade ; which make me deem those men the worst

of incendiaries, who, to satiate their own turbulent tempers, thus wickedly inflame the hearts of the people. It gave me much anxiety to find the spirit of liberty so far prevail, that I could not live on friendly terms with my neighbours, without sacrificing the privilege of even thinking; and, several of us, who differed in sentiments from them, finding it impossible to keep up social friendship, withdrew from their company; when, for want of opposition, after many months séparation, the flame began by degrees to cool; at which time the worthy Baronet, who represents us in parliament, came into the country, and as we all know that he has nothing so much at heart as the happiness of his constituents, and the good of his country, he has ever bore great weight with us; he, on finding such a division, with great good nature was indefatigable in bringing about a reconciliation; and by many arguments from his own knowledge of the history of the hero they espoused, and the men and their motives who set him up as a public instrument, he so far prevailed, that he had the pleasure of seeing union restored, and accordingly we dined altogether at my house, where it was unanimously agreed to vest me (being senior) with full power to silence, by a signal, any argument that might appear to revive our former discord, which has sometimes created much mirth; but I have frequently observed, that the spirit of liberty

can scarce be kept within the bounds of decency. Peace being thus restored between the men, the ladies soon followed our example, and accepted of an invitation from my wife, where meeting and joining in their former friendly compliments, as they came without their party colours, one of them proposed for each to send home for her ribbands ; which, after giving her reason for it, being agreed to, they all set to work, and on a large dish, with twigs and splinters, erected a pretty little pyramid ; and when the ribbands arrived, they took both Orange and Blue, and so neatly adorned it, that it looked as fine as a May-day garland ; and composed the following little air on the occasion :

“ Let Courtiers and Wilkites, and such wrangling elves,
 “ For places and pensions contend by themselves :
 “ To destroy our sweet concord they’ll find it in vain,
 “ For united in friendship we’ll ever remain.”

Being all perfect in it, and agreeing in a tune, they put the pyramid on a large oval table, when setting fire to it, they joined hand-in-hand, and sung and danced round it, till the emblems of contention were quite consumed. As the poor taylor, who was the only champion that dared publicly espouse the cause of government, and the poor cobler, had been such great sufferers by the contest, they collected ten guineas for the taylor, and the cobler, being an old neighbour of good character,

rafter, dejected by his sudden change of fortune, and almost superanuated, they settled a weekly allowance on him for life.

" Our former tranquility being thus restored, I was obliged, by my commission, to check you when you mentioned the name of Wilkes ; and as you see, *Will*, (said my uncle) on what slender motives men (when formed in a junto) will give up their friends, let me advise you to be ever cautious of sacrificing your principles to other men's interests or passions ; there is a pride too inherent in mankind to persevere in any thing they have once made an appearance in ; I have known men, even in private contests, who at first have engaged with indifference ; but when they been increased by numbers, and rose to a party affair, slander and perjury have become familiar to them. National party frequently originates from those whose unbounded pride can brook neither laws nor men that are a bar to their ambition ; for when such begin, they are soon joined by others whose natural food is contention, and are ever ready to fall in with that set which can furnish them with the most ample entertainment ; and as there are such numbers who have neither judgment nor appetite of their own, but join hastily in the first uproar, it is not to be wondered that this Wilkite disturbance rose to so high a pitch." Here, we were interrupted by a servant, who entered and told him,

that Levi, the pedler, begged to know if he wanted any thing. "Shew him up," said he. When the Jew entered, my uncle desired him to open his shop, and, after some pleasantry on the arts which are frequently practised by such traders, he put several trinkets into his pockets to give his tenants' daughters; after agreeing and paying for them, he bade him go down and refresh himself. When Levi turned about, we observed the skirt of his coat half tore of. "How came your coat tore so?" said my uncle. "Sir, (said he) such a gentleman, (naming him) set his dog at me, for selling a pair of buckles to one of his footmen." "O, poor man, there is a shilling for a pair of scissars, present them to my house-maid, and she will mend it for you." When Levi departed, I asked my uncle, if he did not think encouraging such idle men an oppression to fair trade? "Indeed, *Will*, (said he) I think it rather an encouragement to fair trade; nor can he be deemed idle; for I dare say the poor man frequently walks twenty miles a day with that heavy box at his back for a very bare living. I never look on these men as Jews, but as fellow-creatures, made with the same appetites, which equally require subsistence; therefore give some encouragement to support them in the line of life which it has pleased Providence to cast them in, lest, by insults and neglect, they should be induced to forfeit that life by acts injurious to

the

the public. Our Creator, to answer his own wise end in making us useful to each other, has formed us with different inclinations. From some observations which I have made, I believe it would be as violent a struggle against nature, for some men to confine themselves to manual labour, as it would be for others to refrain from it ; yet each, by proper application of their talents, may be equally useful to the public, which is instanced in these poor travelling pedlars ; for by continually strolling about and exposing their wares, they provoke a trade extraordinary, and are the means of keeping many thousands employed whose talents are adapted to retired application : even the common ballad-singers may be more useful in that way than their natural cast would permit them to be in any other ; for by constantly chaunting their songs about, there are ten times more sold than if confined to booksellers shops ; which, in some degree, adds to the rag-merchant, the paper-maker, the printer, and the stationer ; each of which have their uses, and, like small fibres in the human body, assist in giving motion and circulation to the whole ; therefore, to interrupt them in a state they are contented with, and useful to the public, is acting in direct opposition to that liberty we pretend to maintain. This poor Levi is another instance of the evil which arises from party connection ; that neighbour of mine, who so abused him, bears the character of

of a violent patriot ; and as he intends next election to offer himself a candidate to our neighbouring city (that magazine of fraud and oppression) he, in compliment to the citizens, is continually abusing these poor travelling traders. There is one great patriot amongst them that deals in hardware, and such trinkets as they do, who is continually teasing the magistrates and members of parliament for a law to banish all such thieves, as he terms the pedlers and Jews ; but my maids say, they had much rather deal with their Chapman Levi, than such a Christian as he is.

“ I imagine, *Will*, when our forefathers singled out men, and invested them with so great a trust as the establishing laws on which their very existence depended, and by which each individual expected both his person and property lawfully protected, that such an act as my neighbour’s would not have preferred a man to so delicate a trust ; but so high a passion for parliament did not then prevail, as to sacrifice the principles which ought to prefer them to that station by an act of tyranny on a single subject, to oblige a corporation. I have in my time seen many candidates, whose chief talents were penetration in discovering and securing agents whose principles were best adapted for cementing parties, and playing the vilest tricks on the public ; in return for which

which, they have received the instructions of such agents to act in conjunction, and go through any thing to obtain their ends ; from which observation, I have made party contest the truest barometer to judge of the natural principles of men.

“ I will relate to you a singular instance of party abuse lately acted in our neighbouring corporation : A man, in good credit, on sufficient proof of his being defrauded of a large sum by a noted culprit, prosecuted him ; the offender being connected in a party, and related to one of the aldermen, a remarkable busy agent in elections, he, in conjunction with the rest of the party tribe, (who were all true-blues) were determined to wade through all, and, if possible, bring him off with honour ; as the first step, the attorney that the prosecutor employed, was brought over to betray his trust, which was soon discovered ; then every engine was set to work to procure the injured man’s nearest friends to persuade him to submit it to arbitration, which he absolutely denied them. The alderman, in whom it was the highest piece of impertinence to make a request of such consequence to a man independent (except in trade) of him and every one, continually kept teasing him ; and being joined by numbers, the plaintiff, lest the public should imagine he depended more on the power of the law than the justice of his cause,

cause, resigned it entirely to him, the alderman guilefully declaring his impartiality, and pressing it, by assuring him it was the earnest desire of the friends on both sides, that he should decide it: consent being obtained, in less than two hours he procured the attorneys on each side at his own house, and they before being privy to his design, came with the instruments of release in their pockets: from his own house the alderman went to the plaintiff's, and, in person, from thence led him under his own roof, and there not only cut him off from every shilling, but to give it a favourable appearance to his relation, who got great part of his living by such practices, cast all the law charge on him; at the same time so conscious of his infamy, that he proposed to the plaintiff to sign a bond never to mention any thing concerning it. The defendant's attorney, a very *honest* man, a member of the corporation, and a pensioner to that honourable body, had his bill ready drawn out in the alderman's house, and demanded the money as punctually as if it had been gaol fees. The plaintiff some time after, on seeing a charge of two guineas given to a counsellor, for answering a bill in Chancery, surmised, from many circumstances, that no such service had been executed, and judging the culprit to be so old a stager that he knew, by frequent application, as much of the law against such offences as any counsellor could tell him; consequently never intended

to

to defend it, but relied entirely on his party to redeem him ; the plaintiff, therefore, went to the attorney, and (as he had paid for it) demanded a sight of the copy, which was absolutely denied ; and though the plaintiff charged him with his suspicion, and publicly spoke of it, yet he never vindicated himself by producing the counsellor's acknowledgment (who lived in the neighbourhood) of having for such service received such money ; from whence the plaintiff surmised (there being so good an understanding between the attorneys) that the charge was made to defraud and deceive him with an appearance of the suit's being carried on ; but all this was not sufficient ; for having tasted the lamb's blood, as the plaintiff publicly complained of the abuse, being not able to vindicate it, the genius of the whole party was united in studying every method of abuse and defamation ; low people were employed to abuse him at his own door, and other places ; and having a printer of their own party, and of their own stamp, his press became the mean receptacle of every anonymous slander they could invent. As they knew the man was capable of charging them with such an act of fraud and treachery, they were so struck with guilt, that they practised the most sordid methods to hide themselves from him. The injured person was at this time concerned in a bond of consequence for a joint purchase with fifteen others, eleven of whom

were of the corporation, and five of them aldermen, with the little gentleman at their head ; the bond was sealed, and signed with each man's hand ; and though there can be no difference between forging a person's name to a bond, and erasing a name from one, when it is done to defraud, yet they absolutely erased his name from it, and another man's name was placed in its stead ; yet, though it could not be done without their mutual consent, each separately, when charged, denied being concerned in it ; which shews, when men have engaged in a bad act, how desperately they will wade through every thing to accomplish their wicked ends.

“ There were not less than three of the vilest perjuries procured from men who were objects beneath the law ; nor could any thing, except murder to conceal robbery, exceed the actions of this united body ; nay, the man (who never was known to engage in a mean act, and had spirit to stand or fall before a world of open enemies) had the mortification to see a number of men, who had ever professed an inviolable friendship for him, basely on this occasion slink behind him ; and as they had been wrought on to persuade him to the arbitrament, to screen themselves, endeavoured to palliate the fraud ; and such a general meanness ran through the citizens, those sons of liberty, tho' conscious there

there could not be a more vile innovation on property, they so far dreaded to offend the corporation, that not one in ten dared openly to condemn it.

“ The little gentleman being loaded with honour for so high a stroke in party politicks, became soon inspired with a more exalted scheme, and on the approach of the election got printed hand-bills distributed, desiring the citizens to meet at the Court-hall, and there (notwithstanding the provision the law has made to secure the independence of elections) he, with the assistance of the rest of his brethren, who ought to have been the last men to urge an influence, modestly desired the citizens to sign their names in favour of his patron ; and several of the corporation becoming precedents to such a glorious specimen of liberty, they absolutely allured several unwary people ; and the little alderman, from the abundance of his own consequence, judging the citizens incapable of chusing for themselves, assured them publicly in the Court-hall, that there was not *a man in the world* that they ought to prefer before his friend ; yet, notwithstanding such a public insult, they all got safe to their houses, without any attempt being made to tar and feather them.

“ The injured man, whom I shall ever value for so high a piece of public justice, as he prosecuted the offender to convince him he would not be defrauded, determined to expose the little worshipful who brought him off; and, notwithstanding the united force of their corporation party, their utmost endeavours to destroy both his credit and his trade, and all the vile slanders in print, and the perjuries they procured, he publicly, in print, with his name signed to it, charged him with his deception and fraud, and challenged him to submit to a fair and public hearing of his conduct, before some neighbouring country justices, the most favourable tribunal on earth that could be pointed out for him. The sum in dispute was an hundred pounds, which was little regarded by the man, in comparison of the manner in which he was so *worshipfully* tricked out of it; and if the alderman could have proved, that he had not as firm a title to recover it by law as if there had been a bond for it, he would have rested satisfied. But as he and his party knew, that an attempt to defend would expose the whole; and judging it as necessary to support the credit of a useful minon as a merchant, he having so well acquitted himself as a city justice, from such merit, and the art of currying some men’s hobby horses, they determined to confirm him a double justice, and advanced him to a seat amongst the very men whom he was challenged to stand before

to

to justify himself. Let every one, who regards the safety of his property and reputation, seriously consider—when he views this man advanced to a seat of justice, without attempting to vindicate his reputation, after being publicly charged in print with betraying his neighbour, beguiling him of an hundred pounds, and attempting to bind him under hand and seal never to discover it, and with erasing his name from a bond ; all these charges made against him by a man in credit, that had been a citizen above thirty years, who never in his life had a mean contention with any man, and whose character had ever stood irreproachable till so vile an act created such a party to defend it by slander and perjury—whether such a man ought to be placed on another bench of justice, and doubly vested with power to punish a poor criminal, who, through necessity, may be urged to steal a loaf ! As the power and purity of our laws, when justly executed, protects us in our property, and punishes the invaders of it, the magistrate must be a double traytor to his country, who stands between a subject and the law to protect an offender. I have observed many men, *Will*, who, whilst they have pursued the tract they were bred in, without doing either good or evil, or turning either to the right or left, have acquired the character of very honest men ; but when something has excited either their

interest

interest or ambition, nature has directly started to receive it ; like seeds which have lain dormant in the earth, and long retained their seminal virtues, but when moved by the plough-share, and indulged by a kindly season, then the nature of the seed and the soil is discovered.

“ I have often reflected on what motives such baneful instruments as Corporation Charters could be granted in a land of liberty, which, in my opinion, answer no end but the collecting one part of the people in a body, and giving them a power to abuse the rest ; who, whilst they are picking the pockets of his Majesty’s subjects, throw dust in their eyes, by railing against government and wicked rapacious ministers of state.” ‘ But, sir, (said I) do you not think they are requisite to keep peace and good order amongst the people ?’ “ In truth, *Will*, I do not ; and if you will consider what is done by one active magistrate at the west end of London, amongst so many hundred thousands of people, I believe you will stand convinced, that a dozen worships in a small corporation, or borough, can answer no end, but giving them a presumptive power over their neighbours, and terrifying them with the force of their united body.” ‘ But, sir, (said I) I suppose you did not talk in that stile when you represented our neighbouring corporation in parliament.’ “ No, *Will*,

Will, I did not, but from thence I discovered, that it would be for the good of the country, if such a set of wretched corporation ministers were entirely extirpated from the land. And as it may be an useful admonition to you, I will give you the facts on which I founded my opinion : Soon after I came to my fortune, being connected with a young gentleman equally desirous of shining in life, we were waited on by several of the corporation, aldermen and commoners, brewers, wine and brandy merchants, tavern-keepers, and others, who having an high opinion of our virtue, earnestly requested that we would represent them in parliament. As to the two gentlemen that had offered themselves, they told us, the people did not look on them as the right sort ; and as they were determined to have true patriots, assured us, that if we would start against them, they would promise us a very easy heat. Thus encouraged, after receiving a plan for proceeding from the mayor, we sent a special address to this commanding officer of the city, humbly begging that he would excuse our presumption, in requesting his worship to prevail on the *honourable* body corporate, over which he presided, to give us leave, at the grand tavern, to offer our most zealous services to defend, in parliament, the lawful rights and privileges of a corporation of such consequence to the nation, at a time so perilous, when the liberties of the subject stood in imminent danger from the invading power of a corrupt and wicked ministry.

ministry. In a few days we received for answer, that, from the high opinion the public entertained of our principles as patriots, they (the corporation who presided over them) had consented to hear on a certain day, at the hour of one, our application in the public court-hall, and from thence adjourn to the tavern. On this invitation, we sent each of us a buck from our parks, several leverets, and about 20 brace of partridges, humbly soliciting his worship to order some trusty person to seek out for a caterer of eminence to provide and superintend an entertainment adequate to the honour of such respectable guests. Notice being given, that we intended to make a public entry, we were met by about four hundred zealous citizens at near six miles from the city, who had waited several hours for our arrival, and, as all the ale-houses were opened on this occasion by their orders, they were prepared to give us that joyous reception which is natural to sons of freedom, which cost us *only* 67 pounds. On advancing our march, we were much impeded by many whom zeal and brandy had so inspired, that we could scarce keep them from under our horses feet. Within three miles of the city we came to an ale-house, before which were placed several long tables, with buttocks of beef, hams, tongues, bottles of wine, brandy, gin, &c. and as our troops had not been in actual service for seven years before, after so hard a march they had occasion for refreshment.

Here

Here we staid as long as time would permit, but, when the word was given to march, we found that half our company were inseparable from the beef and brandy ; and, as the other half would admit of no impediment, they filled their pockets with provisions, and, armed with bottles of gin and brandy in their hands, frequently staggered up, and insisted on my taking a dram to Liberty ; so, when we reached the suburbs, we could muster but 72, the rest lying by the way-side. Being now joined by a number of country gentlemen in our interest, we made up a handsome cavalcade, and, as humble candidates, when we entered the city, we rode uncovered, and being both young fellows, neglected that respect which was due to the mob, by continually bowing to the ladies, who crowded the windows, and indeed gave us a most cheerful reception, by repeatedly waving their lily hands and violet hankerchiefs, crying, ‘ Liberty ! Liberty !’ and notwithstanding the violent clamour, we could frequently hear them say, ‘ La, what two fine young gentlemen they are ! well, if ever I saw two such sweet young gentlemen in all my life !’ and indeed my heart returned their compliments ; for the city was blessed with such a number of fine women, that it appeared as if all the beauties in the county had been collected to tempt us to represent them in parliament. My attention being so engaged, on riding near a projected bulk,

a drunken cobler leaped up behind me, and putting his hat on my head, after fastening it on with a swinging thump, and clapping me on the back, cried out, ' Liberty ! liberty ! stick to liberty, my boy, and I'll spend every shilling to back you.' Being disengaged from the cobler, we soon approached the court-hall, where every proper ceremony was adjusted for introducing us ; as my grandfather had represented the same corporation, I had in my possession the speech he had formerly made them on a like occasion, and being pretty perfect in it, and having a tolerable delivery, I hoped to have given a good specimen of my elocution, but, at the appearance of such an awful assembly, confess I was struck with such a tremor, that I believe I made but an indifferent figure ; however, I got through, but was still more confounded to see them gaping at each other for above ten minutes, and not a single word directed to us. At last, one of the aldermen, who had formerly been an apothecary to our family, stood up, and relieved my anxiety : ' Gentlemen, (said he) I know the gentleman ; I have often purged him, gentlemen ; and I have often bled him, gentlemen ; and, I can assure you, he is good blood, gentlemen ; and if you will take my word for it, gentlemen, he is the *only man in the world* to represent us in parliament.' This favourable speech being ended, the whole bench most gracefully

gracefully inclined their heads to me ; and finding they were as cautious of speaking in public to me as I was to them, we adjourned to a tavern ; where, after two or three glasses, we became very sociable. The mayor, on hearing of the cobler's freedom to me, ordered him directly to be publicly whipt ; and on my pleading, for mercy, ' O, sir, (said he) he is a saucy fellow ; he frequently plays his wit off on the common citizens ; but, as we look on you now as one of ourselves when he exercises his wit on any of *us*, we make him sensible of the respect that is due to the gentlemen of the corporation.' Here we were called aside, and introduced to a gentleman in another room, who told us, that he was an alderman and city chamberlain, and that the corporation, by general consent, had given him leave to present us, as gentlemen of such distinguished merit, with the freedom of their antient city. After returning most grateful acknowledgments for so high an honour, (as he kept bowing in a manner which expressed a meaning) we asked him, if any expence attended it ? ' No, gentlemen, it is a free gift of the corporation, except a—compliment to the chamberlain ; the chamberlain, gentlemen—is a—an officer of some *consequence*—as the town serjeants, city officers, city tenants, and many charitable donations, are established by *his* interest—the common purchase for the freedom is a—twenty pounds,

but when given *honorary*, is a—given at discretion, but a—come, gentlemen—let us join company, and drink success to the election.' Finding we were ranked as freemen of honour, we consulted what present we should give to this officer of *consequence*, adequate to his high station and the interest he bore. The mayor did us great honour in appointing a proper conductor, and every thing for dinner was provided and disposed in the most elegant manner; and, after the table was cleared, (the claret and 'rack punch being very good) many spirited toasts went round, to those worthy patriots who stood ready to spend their fortunes for the good of their country. His worship, the mayor, asked me, if I knew that rogue, the Prime Minister; and being answered in the affirmative, ' Well, sir, (said he) before you go through one sessions, I hope you will give a vote to hang *that* *there* fellow: if I could live to see *that* *there* fellow hanged up, I should leave the world in some hopes of posterity. Come, gentlemen, charge your glasses.—Silence, gentlemen—Here is a speedy junction between that rogue's neck and a strong halter; if any of you know cause, or just impediment, why these two should not publickly be joined together at Tyburn, you are to declare it.' After some silence, the clerk to the justices stood up, and testified their consent *nemine contradicente*. ' Then, off with your bumpers, gentlemen,'

men,' said the mayor; which was concluded with three thundering huzzas. My friends had prudently reserved the leverets and partridges to make up a supper, which was served up with great decency; after which they grew quite warm and zealous in the cause of liberty, and seemed transported with the prospect of having two such honourable gentlemen to represent them. After spending our time in this manner till about three in the morning, we were invited by the mayor to his house; and after giving an admonition to the young common councilmen not to keep late hours, we departed with full assurance of success.

“ Next morning we proposed making a general canvas among the citizens, likewise to pay our respects to the ladies; and as his worship had given us such countenance, we begged of him to strengthen our application; but he assured us, there would be no occasion for it. ‘ You see, gentlemen, (said he) that the corporation appear to be with you; and as we are the leading people, who have such power and influence, I believe you may rest satisfied:—if you think proper, you may give the ladies of the corporation a ball; and, as to other matters, I shall endeavour to guide you in the easiest manner to avoid such expences as frequently attend elections.’ Being entertained by his worship,

ship, after dinner several of the aldermen dropped in to enquire after our healths, and the bottle going freely round, his worship's lady said, ' My dear, I believe we must soon replenish our stock, for, on this occasion, we shall have a number of visitors, and I shall not care to see our cause starved.' From which we took the hint, and, in the evening, most humbly begged that his worship would not suffer us to intrude on his cellar, but permit us, on this occasion, to send in a few hampers of such wine as we drank for our own use. Consent, with great difficulty and seeming reluctance, being obtained, we wrote to our wine-merchant to send directly a hogshead of claret, one of madeira, one of port, and one of lisbon ; and that we might go off with the prayers of the poor, we proposed to his worship, giving ten guineas to the rector of each parish, to be divided at their discretion among such families as might be in distress, and whose spirit would not permit them to receive a public gift ; likewise, ten guineas to the church-wardens, to be given amongst their poor. To this his worship strongly objected, saying, that as all public donations passed through the hands of the corporation, it might give umbrage ; adding, that on public occasions, they summoned the citizens by hand-bills to the court-hall, to give in their charities ; and, as corporations are guided both by charter and custom, ' observe, Sir, (said he) the many charities that wise and pious people, from a high

a high opinion of corporation honour and honesty, have intrusted us with ; from which, Sir, you may judge, that the citizens will chuse none but men of the strictest probity for so weighty a charge ; and as we are chose by a majority, those who dissent from us on public occasions, are deemed rebels to their own consciences and their own magistrates. If you, Sir, will come to our great church on a Sunday, you will be convinced of the great esteem we stand in, by the fine bows that my lord bishop and all the gown-men make to us ; therefore, as we have the power of placing or turning out all city officers, tenants, &c. and such constant applications are made to us by the citizens for charities, and many other favours, it may greatly prejudice your interest to slight such a respectable body, by putting it into the hands of parsons and church-wardens ; but you may place the money with me, and I'll take care it shall be disposed of in the most charitable manner to establish your interest.' Finding every thing must go through his hand, we gave him the money, and bills necessary to pay for our entertainment, music, bell-ringers, and all the consequences of our cavalcade ; and, according to his advice, set off early in the morning to our seats, where we imagined to rest in security till the day of election ; but in about ten days, we received a most alarming express from our friends, assuring that the orange party were under-

undermining us, that the candidates were two of the rankest Whigs in the kingdom, and therefore begged of us, for God's sake, if we had any regard for our country, to come directly and save it. To avoid giving our friends a second trouble of meeting us, we went privately, in the evening, to his worship's house, and having laid in so good a stock, thought to have made it our quarters; but he having a tender regard to our success, acquainted us that the inn-keepers were men of considerable interest, and that it might give them umbrage if we lodged at a private house on so public an occasion. On this we retired to a principal inn, where his worship politely condescended to sup with us and advise in our proceedings.

" Next morning we were visited by two brewers, (there being four in the city, who have a very good understanding, except on elections, at which times they prudently divide, to keep a ballance of power between court and country;) these gentlemen told us they were capital brewers, absolute landlords of above forty houses in the city, all licensed by the corporation, with whom they were upon good terms; that their tenants were all freemen, entirely at their disposal, who knew they must be turned out if they did not vote for liberty and property; ' therefore, gentlemen, (said one of them) from the high opinion

we entertain of your patriotic principles, they are all at your service, and you may begin to open them as soon as you please.' On this friendly proffer, we humbly begged their advice when and how to proceed with them. ' Why, gentlemen, the sooner the better; the orange party opened two last night, and I dare say, if you set off with spirit, that you will soon knock them up; therefore, I advise you to begin boldly, and open four to night; and so go on, then you will see how the common people stand for you. To this we consented, and requested the favour of them to appoint the houses, and let us know the signs, that we might visit our friends in the height of their mirth. At their departure, in came four haberdashers, who told us, they had always been in the interest of the country, and that it provoked them to see so many about with orange coloured cockades, without any blue to oppose them; ' for, Sir, (say they) a great many will incline to the side they think strongest, and judge that to be so which makes the greatest appearance in ribbands.' ' If that be the case, pray, gentlemen, stand our friends, and furnish our party directly with proper colours.' On hearing our opponents were very busily employed, and being now joined by some neighbouring gentlemen, who were good customers to the citizens, we proceeded on our canvas. Our first application was to the mayor, begging of

his worship, as principal magistrate, to give spirit to our canvas by personal appearance ; which he modestly declined, saying, it would be looked on as influencing the people ; ' but, you know my mind, gentlemen, and I wish you success.' I was much surprised to find such a coolness amongst many of our corporation friends ; several of whom called us aside, and told us, that the orange party were so spiteful against any man in trade who voted against them, that they lost several customers the last election ; therefore, had resigned their votes to the disposal of their wives, that they might not be upbraided by them with injuring their families. The ladies would not absolutely promise us ; but received our address with a politeness that demanded a grateful return ; and having a relation, an India Captain, just arrived, who had good luck in landing his goods, we procured a number of fine chints, taffaties, muslins, and a large quantity of handkerchiefs ; and one of the aldermen being a silversmith and jeweller, after making up a number of assortments, we were instructed by the mayor's lady (who could scarce be prevailed on to receive any) in the most delicate manner of presenting them to the ladies. In the evening we went round to visit our friends at the ale-houses, where we were received by a fine band of music, and ushered through all the apartments ; there we saw such profusion of beef, hams, tongues, punch,

punch, brandy, and gin, as could only be suitable to such a company ; for all the houses were crowded with every sort that could be of no credit or service. Our good friends, the brewers, ushered us from house to house, to convince us what a party they had raised in our interest ; and after hearing many jovial songs on liberty, we retired to our inn about twelve, where we were told by the landlord, that as it was the headquarters, it was customary to have one apartment open, during the election, for the gentlemen of the corporation and their friends, to consult matters ; on which, we ordered that no expence should be spared for the reception of such particular friends.

“ Next morning, we were visited by one of the aldermen, who was a brandy merchant, that knew we professed ourselves patriots for the good of the country, and came to acquaint us with the great danger that might accrue to the citizens from drinking such vile smuggled stuff as the ale-houses, on this occasion, made their punch of. ‘ I do assure you, gentlemen, it is composed chiefly of—we felt the fatal consequences of it last time ; for no less than twenty-seven were down right killed, and forty-five lay so ill in bed that they could not come to the poll-table ; by which means we lost the election : not that I matter (said he) the selling a little brandy, at a time there is scarce

any thing to be got by the true spirit that pays duty ; but as an alderman, one of the fathers of the city, it is my duty to see that the citizens have what is good and wholesome ; therefore, if you please to leave that province to my care, I will answer, you shall not lose a single vote.' As his worship's request proceeded from a paternal regard to the citizens, we directly made him superintendent of the brandy and gin. Soon after, near forty of our friends crowded in, telling us, that they, or their wives, had relations in the adjacent towns, some ten, some twenty miles off, who were freemen ; and though they could ill spare the time, yet, for the good of their country, and for fear the orange party should engage them, they were willing to take carriages directly, to go and secure them. Such a friendly offer we could not avoid embracing, and begged they would spare no expence in entertaining themselves and their relations on such a necessary occasion. Though the election was then two months distant, our opponents, being men of fortune and spirit, were lavish in their expences ; and the friends on both sides, being anxious to support the honour of their colours, were so industrious in collecting and keeping the freemen together at the ale-houses, that, in a few days, all kind of work was as much neglected as if the business of the whole nation depended on our election. We were continually visited by poor

women

women with children in their arms, who said, it was hard that they and their families should starve, whilst their husbands were spending all their time in the ale-houses in our cause, and the good of their country. On such frequent applications, and having a precedent from the other party, we ordered a weekly allowance to each poor freeman's family ; but were soon told by the butchers and bakers, that they spent most of the money in gin, and that an allowance in bread and meat would be more to our honour. Some of the drapers told us, it would greatly strengthen our interest, to give coats and gowns to the poor people, and then the public would see we did some good with our money ; whereas, spending it all at the ale-houses, was only ruining the poor people ; besides, it would add credit to the party ; for the orange men were continually crying, ' See what poor ragged dogs the blues are ! ' So, to keep up the credit of our party, we ordered such a number to be distributed as they thought requisite. The linen-drappers told us, they were confident that many of our friends had not a shirt to their backs. and that it was always customary, on such occasions, to give a little linen to the poor. To this request we likewise complied, and so went on from the hatter to the shoemaker, till a great number of our party were cloathed from head to foot ; some of our principal friends came in one evening, and alarmed us with receiving

receiving certain information that the orange party were privately buying votes at a guinea a head, on which we begged their advice. ‘ Why, faith, gentlemen, (said they) we scarce know how to advise you; we know you have the hearts of the people with you, but money is tempting to poor men, therefore if you have a mind to stand it, we think it prudent to advance something; but great caution must be used, and no time lost.’

“ After some consultation, my friends were so kind to take each a hundred pound bill, and set off directly on this important business. In two days after, they came again, and, with dejected countenances, told us that the orange had advanced to three guineas a head. ‘ Well, gentlemen, what would you advise us to do?’ ‘ Why, faith, gentlemen, in such an expensive affair, we know not what to say; the hearts of the people are certainly with you; but such temptations may bring them over. You can best judge yourselves, whether it is worth while; but we imagine, if you will advance another thousand, that it will pretty well cool their courage.’ ‘ Well, gentlemen, we must beg of you once more to stand our friends.’ ‘ Pray, gentlemen, excuse us; you have other friends that may like to share this trouble: it is true we have some influence over the people, and know how to dispose of the money; but, besides

sides laying ourselves under such obligations, it is so plaguing to deal with such a number—but, however, as we have entered into it, and as it is for the good of the country, we will not drop you now.' So they kindly received a thousand, and set off, which was repeated till it came to eight guineas a vote; during which time we had the comfort of hearing the parties on each side exulting that they had got men of spirit to back the cause, who would not lose it if it cost them forty thousand pounds.

"Knowing the landlord of our inn to be an honest, hearty, sincere man, who, when in his cups, would, in his rough manner, bolt out all he knew of any body, we took him one day, after dinner, in a favourable mood, and asked him seriously what he thought of our election? 'Why, gentlemen, let me know how your minds and your money stand; if you have got as much cash as the orange gentlemen, and are as willing to spend it, I believe it will be a hard push.' 'But, landlord, as we have the corporation on our side, and several of them very busy in our interest, it must certainly turn the scale in our favour.' 'The corporation, (said he) why half of them wore the other colour the last election; and, I dare say, when it comes to the push, you will see half of them turn now; for, to my knowledge, several

of them have already applied to the orange gentlemen for places, leases of land, and other favours.' On this declaration, we told him freely the different sums of money we had given to our friends, and asked him if they were men of such interest with the freemen as they pretended.—

‘ Why, gentlemen, if you have given them such sums, your money may procure them some interest ; but I never heard that they had any before ; and if the poor men must be bought, 'tis pity you don't give it yourselves, without letting it pass through such hands, and, I can assure you, it is they which have run you to this expence ; for, I am certain, there was not a farthing given by the orange gentlemen, when they told you they were giving guineas ; it is true, we have some good sort of men in the corporation, but there are a pack amongst them, who practised such vile tricks on the public last election, that none of the principal citizens will shew themselves to you—They men of interest ! why, gentlemen, if you will go to the common ale-house facing the parade, there, from eleven o'clock till one, for spending about nine-pence or a shilling, you may judge what a set they are ; there you will see the mayor, the chamberlain, the clerk to the justices, and half the aldermen and common councilmen, constantly, every morning, with bowls of punch before them ; and as men who spend their time in

in such an idle manner, entertain each other accordingly. Scarce a morning passes but they make a bankrupt of some creditable tradesman, or privately deliver some reputable woman of a bastard child ; they perfectly know all the rogues of state, and give a history of every whore and rogue in the city, except those of their own families. A man in this city having a law-suit with one of their set, they sent for his only evidence to this ale-house, and there, by punch and persuasion, endeavoured to corrupt him ; and the mayor of the city, a draper, a *Freind*, and one of their party, though the evidence could neither read or write, gave him his oath to what they had drawn up, saw him set his mark to it, and it was publicly printed without the plaintiff's knowledge ; so you may judge what chance the public can have from such magistrates. Gentlemen, if these men will daily link themselves together in a public ale-house, and join in doing and defending such a notorious act as that, you may judge in what esteem the public holds them. Why, your friend, the brandy-merchant, has just now been found out to have obtained a lease of some land which belonged to the poor, (over whom he was guardian) in a very *collusive* manner.—They men of interest ! why, I myself have more interest than half of them put together ; for, besides several of my servants who are free-men, there is my butcher, baker, barber, and several tradesmen who get half their living out of

such a house as mine.' ' Well, landlord, (said I) we hope you have secured them for us.' ' Not I indeed, gentlemen; if you make me an alderman, perhaps I may turn procurer for you in the Court-hall; but, till then, as I do not want money, or desire, on such terms, to be thought a man of consequence, I shall think myself unworthy of a house over my head, if I desire any man to give up his freedom to me—I may, perhaps, vote for you myself; but that I will not promise till the time comes; however, I can assure you, there is no advantage taken; for they are playing the same game on the other side; and I should not be surprised to see it brought up to twenty guineas a vote.' This candid declaration of our landlord tallying with the conduct of our friends, we began seriously to reflect on our state and the hands we were in; and on a rough calculation of our present expence, we computed it at about ten thousand pounds. Knowing our opponents would stand it to the last, we thought it most prudent to resign; but just at that instant our friends, in great rapture, broke in upon us, bidding us prepare to see a sight; when, presently, we heard drums, trumpets, violins, fifes, hautboys, with colours flying, attended with more than double the number we required for our election, all true-blues, with cockades in their hats, hollowing and huzzaing up at the windows, ready to die in the cause of liberty; whilst our friends
kept

kept clapping us on the back—‘ there, gentlemen, did we not tell you that you had the hearts of the people ! but their spirits must be kept up.’ “ This grand collection so inspired us, that we directly begged of our friends to spare no necessary expense in prosecuting a cause they had so much at heart. The city champions on both sides found it so difficult to prevail on their distant friends and relations to bring them to a price, that the roads were continually crowded with carriages for many miles round ; and thus we went on till the eve of the election, when our friends came and told us that several of the freemen, who, judging it would be a hard heat, lay by for the best bidder. ‘ Now, gentlemen, (said they) as this is the crisis, boldly advance one thousand more, and that will secure us.’ This being complied with, we waited for the important day, which was ushered in with all the colours, drums, trumpets, and other music, that could be collected within twenty miles ; every public house in the city and suburbs were opened for the reception of the friends on both sides, who came from all parts to see a contest of such importance decided.

“ The poll being opened, the oath against bribery and corruption was demanded ; which being complied with, they came in crowds and offered up their souls at Satan’s shrine. A jolly alderman, to convince the public that he did not pocket

all the money, was seen putting some guineas into a freeman's hand, as he was going to the poll table to take the oath. My old friend, the cobbler, staggered up, and having the Bible presented to him, desired them for shame to set it by. ' You know (said he) that I have several times received money from you all ; and as I know not from which side I have received most, I will not stain my honour by voting for either ; nor make you witnesses of so vile a perjury.' I confess this poor man's sarcasm has frequently struck me with remorse, when reflecting, that so many magistrates, whilst they made the good of their country a cloak for their infamy, had procured and tempted so many poor souls to trample on that most sacred law which was instituted to defend both life and property. At the close of the poll we found they had dealt with a very even hand, by bringing in one on each side, and I was declared duly elected ; on which our worthy friends came wringing their hands at the ill success of my colleague, crying, ' Ah poor Old England ! what will become of posterity, now the Court has got footing ! they have certainly opened the treasury to get their ends.'— My partner, being a man of spirit and penetration, most heartily gave me joy, and declared, considering the hands we had been in, that the success was beyond his expectation. We found that many on whom we depended, voted against us, and others had divided their votes ; but to the

honour

honour of the ladies, I must declare, that every one of them who appeared in our favour continued true-blue to the last. I directly called in all my bills, and being determined to give my friends no farther trouble, sent for my steward to pay all off without scrutiny. As I imagined it would be some time before the poor freemen could settle to work, I ordered each of their wives half a guinea ; and, after giving a ball to both parties, took a final leave of such disinterested friends.

“ Being now a member of parliament, and judging myself a man of great consequence, I hired a grand house in London ; and though my fortune was great, set up an equipage far beyond it ; and joining with several spirited young patriots, fell into such extravagant scenes, for what they called the good of the country, that I soon found myself necessitated to spur my steward to make the most of every thing. I attempted several times to shew myself a patriot, by saying something spirited against the Minister, for the good of the country ; but finding I was taken but little notice of, I soon become surfeited of a station so expensive, in which I could make no figure ; therefore, at the dissolution of the parliament, bid adieu to public affairs, and retired to my mansion-house, where I soon discovered that my tenants, who before had been pretty much harrassed, looked on my settling amongst them as a most dreadful visitation.

When

When any of them on particular occasions applied to me, they were sure to come on the worst horse and in the worst coat they had ; when they paid their rent, they were obliged to sell a useful horse or two to make it up. Being fond of field diversions, I could scarce find any sport on my own land ; for they were more industrious to destroy the game than the weeds, to prevent my coming near them ; so that I was looked on as a spy on the land in all quarters. One morning as our Vicar was at breakfast with me, a man came (who I suppose judged that I wanted money) and asked me, if I would sell such a farm ; which I desired time to consider of. When he departed, I asked the doctor who he was. ‘ Sir, (said he) as he is continually hovering over every expiring lease in the country, the people call him the *Land Vulture*, and the farmers as much dread to see him come near them, as a hen does a kite when she has got a young brood ; but, I hope, Sir, you will not put it in his power to send the poor old man to his grave ; for as he was born on the farm, it will be the death of him to turn him out.’ ‘ Why, Doctor, (said I) he, like most of them, can scarce pay his rent ; sure, no gentleman in the country has such a set of miserable tenants as I have ! ’ ‘ Because, Sir, (said he) no tenants in this country, for forty years past, have been kept in such a miserable state of dependence ; if you will give them

them security, by sufficient leases, to reap the fruits of their labour, I will answer for it (as I know most of your land) that you will soon have as well an improved estate, and as wealthy tenants, as any gentleman in the county.' The doctor was a man of much reserve and caution ; but having been my tutor, and long waited for such a favourable opportunity to advise me, he expatiated so strongly on the bad conduct of my predecessor, whose tract I followed, and so clearly laid down the great injury the public sustained by landlords who bound up the hands of the husbandman that he soon convinced me, whilst I had been playing the Don Quixote patriot, for the good of the country in general, I neglected both the people and the province which Providence had committed to my charge to be both friend and patriot. Being at that time engaged in a treaty of marriage, which soon after was concluded, with an amiable lady of large fortune, I gave my worthy friend, who was a great judge in agriculture, full power to treat with my tenants for such time, and terms, as he thought proper, which was executed greatly to my present advantage ; for many of them, on such security, freely advanced the rent ; and by the immediate expence they were at, I soon discovered they were not quite so poor as they pretended, and the consequence of the improvement soon convinced me, that I had

not

not only been checking the bounty of Providence, but had likewise awed my tenants from the freedom of enjoying the fruits of their labour. Soon after I was married, as the Doctor sat at breakfast with us, news was brought that an old tenant of mine was dead, and near five thousand pounds in ready specie found in his house. ' Doctor, (said I) I always thought that old man poor.' ' Sir, (said he) I never thought so; but judged the cause that made him appear poor: he succeeded his father in the farm, from whom he had all that he had saved, to which he added near fifty years of his own hard labour, and as he could not have a lease, never dared to enjoy himself, for fear of being raised, or turned out: he had a son and a daughter; the son he kept to the plough, and the daughter to the churn; and being in a state that they dreaded to look at any person better dressed than themselves, the daughter married a drunken shoe-maker, who soon broke her heart, and the son stole his father's best horse, went off with a beggar-wench, and has never since been heard of: so that living in a land of liberty was of no advantage to them, as they resided on a spot where they were afraid to enjoy it.' The Sunday following, when we returned from church, my wife (whose father had none but wealthy tenants about him) observed how meanly the people were dressed, and as she knew the cause which induced them to it was removed,

moved, wished they could be persuaded to make a better appearance, else, I fear (said she) that many of them will have no higher views in matrimony than our old tenant's son and daughter; the Doctor in this motion most heartily concurred, saying, he knew they now were capable of doing it; and as they were able, he thought it a duty they owed the public; for as the advanced price on the product of the land comes from the labourer, the artificer and the trader, they who reap the benefit of it, both landlord and tenant, ought to make adequate returns in dress, furniture, and every necessary, according to their circumstances. My wife was so intent on this reformation, that, by presents, and some persuasions, she soon set such an emulation on foot, that in less than two years, there was such an alteration, that any one who had been at our church before, would scarce have known it to be the same congregation. As the pretty lasses knew that the change proceeded from our instigation, they used to range themselves in the church-yard till we came out, to make their compliments, and show their finery; and being chiefly our own tenant's daughters, we looked on them with pleasure, as so many blooming flowers raised from our own garden. I was so assiduous in encouraging the men, that, in a short time, (as I dressed plain) they thought it a compliment to me to have a coat from the same piece.

Doctor seeing me determined to make every thing about me as happy as prudence and their industry would admit of, pointed out a few of my tenants who, with large families, had long struggled with stubborn soils, that made them incapable of making such improvement as their leases admitted of; these, by lending proper aid to their industry, were soon relieved, and gave me the pleasure of seeing both my land and my tenants enriched. Finding the education of the children inferior to the circumstances of my tenants, my next care (with the assistance of the Doctor) was to establish a good school; and when the lads grew up, as they all could not be farmers or graziers, the Doctor and I were frequently consulted in disposing of them to such trades, or occupations, as we thought best suited the talents of the youths and the circumstances of their parents; from which, I now enjoy the pleasure of seeing some, and hearing of others, who make a reputable figure in the world; and as Divine Providence makes no distinction between the palace and the cottage in the endowments of the mind, I have been particularly careful that no extraordinary genius, born on my estate, should be lost to the public for want of due cultivation. We have a young gentleman now at the University of distinguished good principles and genius, designed for the Church, who, I hope, my successor will present with this living when it comes

comes vacant ; and another at the Temple, from whose natural parts, learning, and great eloquence, we entertain the highest expectation. The Doctor made an early discovery of his great talents ; but till he became satisfied that his principles appeared pure and honest, he would not consent to his being bred to the law, from an instance of an attorney in our neighbourhood, who, though a very shallow fellow, has shewn parts sufficient to do much mischief ; therefore, he thought it dangerous (till well assured) to let so great a genius loose on the public in such a profession. In short, I was not contented with promoting their happiness, till I saw them so confident of it, as to enjoy that decent freedom which every Englishman is intitled to, without being servily awed by a superior ; and they are all so fully convinced of the pleasure I take in their prosperity, that, when any of them have a few hundreds to spare, they come with pride to consult me how to improve it. As I look on them all as my own family, I am never happier than when I have them about me. I remember once, on a rent day, when in my great hall, at the head of sixty of my jolly tenants, the Doctor, who sat next me, whispered and jocosely asked, whether I imagined that I appeared so much like a patriot when in parliament, as I did then ? To which I answered, ' Pray, Sir, repeat no past grievances.' Such

Will, (said my uncle) is the line of life which I have pursued ever since I quitted parliament ; and as there are but two slender lives between you and this estate, I think it my duty to convince you of the real duty of a patriot, and warn you against those vain allurements which too frequently stimulate men to forsake every manly principle in the pursuit of imaginary honour ; nor should I have been so copious in all the mean tricks and crafty wiles which the corporation I represented made use of to me, but to warn you against being seduced by such men. If you should have a passion for parliament, as your fortune will admit of it, offer yourself to the county ; but in a retired life, let me advise you, not to enter into a party. ‘ But, Sir, (said I) is it not laudable in every Englishman to exert himself, when there appears an invasion on our liberty.’ ‘ Indeed, *Will*, (said he) I think it is ; and I hope no Englishman would advance sooner than I would on such an occasion ; but will not, like the reed, be shook by every blast.’

“ I have resided on my estate above forty years, during which time there has scarce been a year but we have been alarmed with some deep design, as if the nation was on the brink of ruin, whilst, by shutting my ears against such idle insinuations, I have enjoyed the satisfaction of seeing my rents gradually

gradually increase, and my tenants grow rich; therefore have never murmured at paying the taxes which have given improvement and security to the whole. ‘ But, Sir, (said I) do you never concern yourself about national affairs?’ ‘ Indeed I do, *Will*, as much as I think necessary to my peace and security. Our county is represented by two gentlemen of great wisdom, whose fortunes and inclinations are far above any temptation or bias; and as they have ever stood ready to give information to their constituents, I make a strict enquiry into the proceedings of parliament at the end of every session, and as we have appointed them to represent us, have ever been determined to rest satisfied with every thing they have consented to; nor would I have you, *Will*, entertain so mean an opinion of English principles and wisdom, as to imagine that the majority of the two Houses, which are composed of the wealthiest men in the nation, would ever consent either to abridge such expences as are sufficient to extend or secure our possessions, or entail unnecessary taxes on their own estates.’ ‘ What, Sir, (said I) can be the reason then of such great contests, and the many learned speeches against several motions that are made?’ ‘ I think it just (said he) in matters of such high importance, to advance every argument that can shew the least appearance of an evil tendency.

tendency, before a law is established ; and as there have always been men of great eloquence and learning in parliament, opposition is the most ample field to shew their talents ; and such have frequently been advanced to high offices in the state, whilst others of very shallow parts, from a notion that opposition is the road to preferment, have fallen into such low invectives against the ministry, that they have appeared more like watermen than gentlemen ; and they have frequently been vain enough to get their speeches published in the news-papers, to appear to the public as great patriots ; but such men may speech their hearts out before they can move me, for I have been determined to avoid any man, who, through a party prejudice, would endeavour to make me jealous of the government under which I have so long lived happy, as I would the man who would attempt to make me jealous of my wife ; therefore, *Will*, if ever you mean to sit in parliament, let me advise you against entering into a party, for then you must appear like a ship on the ocean, without sails or rudder, resigned entirely to the force of the tempest.”

Such, friend Edward, are the truly patriotic principles of my uncle, and such are the sentiments he has inculcated in me ; and as he derived them from facts well ascertained, and notorious corporation

ration frauds acted on himself, I shall ever make them my guide, to avoid the dangerous machinations which are too frequently concerted and executed by bodies corporate, or give up my reason to public clamour.—As the present evil had its birth in that charter-nest Boston, and spread thro' the rest of the mercantile corporations, you would be astonished to know all the artful publications they produced, and measures they practised, to poison the minds of an innocent people, and keep them in subjection ; for the merchants in the cities were almost absolute lords of the labours of all the country round them, and every thing which the planter or husbandman produced for sale, the merchants had it at their own prices, in barter for cloaths, tools, and other necessaries, which was the most that the greater part of the poor men could obtain from their land and labour. Can you, or any reasonable man, imagine, that such a trifle as the Stamp Act was a motive to inflame a whole continent to rebellion ? An act which could not affect one man in a hundred, so far as a shilling a year. No ; they looked on legal officers as spies on their actions, which they knew would by degrees subvert their tyranny and illicit practices, and open both trade and the eyes of the people ; therefore most artfully beguiled them to assist in riveting on their own chains.

As the delegated power of a corporation is to maintain the laws within their jurisdiction, how, Sir, can you defend such an act of violence against the power that established them, as their raising a mob, and, regardless of the rules of navigation and commerce, entering the ships of our fellow-subjects, to wantonly plunder and destroy so large a property? An insult which no free port in the universe, in times of profound peace, would dared to have offered to the subjects of Great Britain. Nor did Absolam, when he lay with his father's concubines on the house-top, give the people a more confirming evidence of his determined rebellion, than these men did when they so ignominiously dragged our commissioned officer through their city, vainly imagining that the countenance they received from your side the water, and the distance of a few thousand miles, would have screened them from correction. The man who defends such principles of liberty, must be an advocate for the Arabian Free-booters. I do assure you, friend Edward, that the dominion which these men have long maintained over their inferiors, servants, and slaves, has so swelled their hearts with ambition, that except on such a union as this, there is scarce any of them who can bear an equal; therefore, if you are a real friend to liberty, and would wish it to ninety-nine out of a hundred, pray for the success of our arms, that

the

the people may enjoy that blessing from the power and wisdom of our government. The present state of these people is really deplorable, being now hemmed in between two fires ; for they who have houses and possessions, whilst they stand exposed to our arms, dread to incline to us, for fear of having their all consumed, of which there have already been too many instances ; for as the fate of their leaders seems inevitable, they appear determined to involve all in the same ruin. I am really so affected with the distress of my fellow subjects here, that, from principles of humanity and liberty, I am determined, if my uncle dies in my absence, to give my brother a fair chance for the estate, by continuing here, till I either fall, or see an end to this rebellion, and a happy establishment to these people. As to all the alarms about the French and Spaniards, being as ignorant of their motions as they are how Providence intends to move them, whilst fighting is my trade, I shall stand prepared to oppose every danger that presents itself, and guard with prudent caution against such as appear probable ; and as to the good or evil that may lay brooding in the womb of futurity, I shall leave the sons of Heraclitus to weep and watch for the good of posterity.

P. S. Being ordered on a party into the Jerseys, I have left this letter with a friend, to be forwarded to England with all convenient expedition.

[*The END.*]



